

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)	
)	
of the Educator's Certificate of)	CONSENT ORDER OF SUSPENSION
)	
Wilma D. McCoy)	
)	
Certificate # 093564)	

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on August 12, 2003. On October 1, 2002, the State Department of Education (Department) sent a notice of hearing of the possible suspension or revocation of her South Carolina Educator's Certificate (certificate) to Ms. Wilma D. McCoy by certified mail, restricted delivery, and return receipt requested. Ms. McCoy received this notice as evidenced by a postal receipt bearing her signature. Subsequent to this request, the Department and Ms. McCoy, through her attorney, Thomas B. Bryant, III, Esquire, proposed to resolve this matter without a hearing by agreeing to the following terms: (1) her certificate will be retroactively suspended from the date of the alleged infraction, March 29, 2001, through June 30, 2001; (2) the suspension will be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all school districts in South Carolina as a suspension on the grounds of unprofessional conduct, breach of test security; and (3) this order will be maintained as a public record in the Office of General Counsel of the Department. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to issue a Consent Order of Suspension on the terms set forth above.

Ms. McCoy holds a valid South Carolina certificate, and has over thirty-seven-years of teaching experience. During the 2000-2001 school year, Ms. McCoy was a teacher at Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School in Orangeburg Country School District Five (District). On March 29, 2001, Ms. McCoy administered the state high school Exit Exam to a class of tenth graders. On April 4, 2001, a parent reported to the guidance counselor that her daughter witnessed Ms. McCoy helping students on the writing portion of the Exit Exam. An investigation followed by the District and then by the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED). On June 27, 2002, Solicitor Walter Bailey indicated in a letter to SLED that he would not indict Ms. McCoy. The Solicitor stated that although he believed some improprieties occurred, he thought the District should handle the matter with an appropriate sanction internally. On July 29, 2002 SLED concluded its investigation, and sent a copy to the Department.

Allegations from students indicate that Ms. McCoy reviewed student writing papers and gave some of them back to make corrections. Ms. McCoy stated that she might have tried to

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Date:

Wilma D.
McCoy
#093564

get some students to write more to do a better job when they appeared to show little effort to complete the exam in a responsible manner. Ms. McCoy was never removed from her teaching position and has taught without incident for the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 school years. She is also under contract for the 2003-2004 school year. Ms. McCoy stated she may have unintentionally violated some test security procedures and has agreed to accept this suspension on the conditions outlined above.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." Just cause includes: "unprofessional conduct," S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (1990); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regulation 43-58 (1992). The State Board finds that the preponderance of the evidence presented by the Department, supports its decision to accept the proposal of the parties to suspend Ms. McCoy's certificate retroactively. Accordingly, the Board hereby retroactively suspends Ms. McCoy's certificate # 093564 from May 1, 2002, through August 1, 2002, on the terms and conditions set forth above.

Accepted:

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Date:

Wilma D.
McCoy
#093564

South Carolina State Board of Education

/S/ Greg Killian

Greg Killian

Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
August 12, 2003

I, Wilma D. McCoy, SC Teaching Certificate # 093564, do hereby agree to this Order of Suspension, consisting of two pages, and understand that this Order will be presented as signed to the State Board of Education on Tuesday, August 12, 2003.

August 8, 2003
Date

/S/ Wilma D. McCoy
Signature